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Cloud Solutions

Robotic Process Automation:

Revolutionizing Your Workforce

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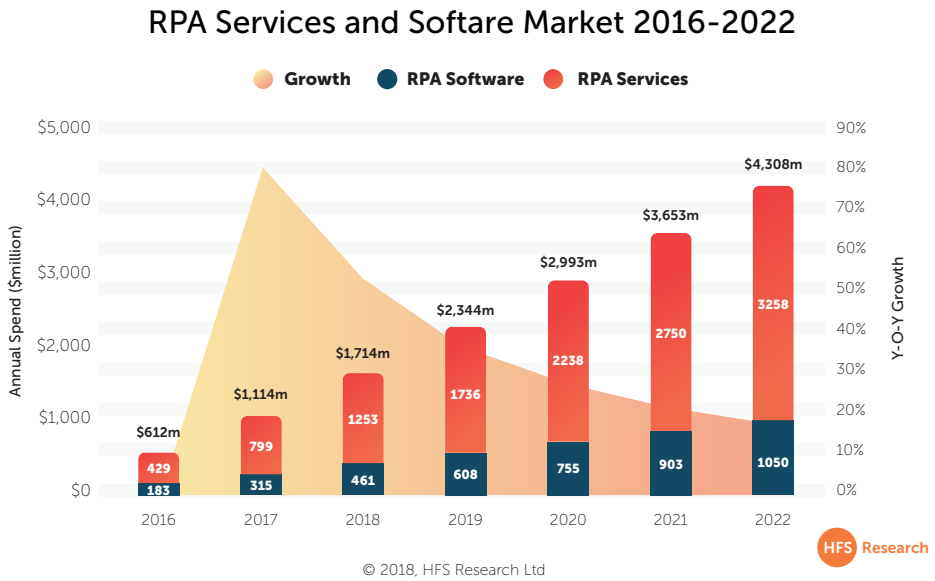
What is Robotic Process Automation (RPA)?

Simply put, RPA is the application of technology to automate rules-based business processes. It has the ability to emulate any repetitive human actions to streamline workflows and increase efficiencies resulting in significant ROI and resource savings. RPA tasks can range from something as simple as data entry to automating the complexities of data extractions for decommissioning systems or migrating EHRs.

RPA acts as a unique temporary or full-time employee to supplement your department or business unit. Unlike RPA however, human employees need breaks, typically only work 40 hours per week, have weekends and holidays off. They call out sick and take vacations. Employees also make mistakes; spelling errors, typos, inputting data in the wrong field, etc...

But what if they didn't?



Forrester predicts the RPA software market to total $2.9 billion in 2021.

RPA Does What Human Employees Can't.

RPA gets projects done in a fraction of the time it would take a human, works 24x7x365, and never gets tired. There's a reason why RPA is seeing its fastest growth across all industries, especially healthcare.

By automating any workflow faster and more accurately than a human user, the ROI is almost immediate. The significant time, cost, and resource savings will enable your organization to remain sustainable and continue to save money over time. Not to be overlooked, humans make mistakes, especially when the tasks are repetitive, mundane, and contain large amounts of data. **Can you risk errors when patient safety and satisfaction is at stake?**

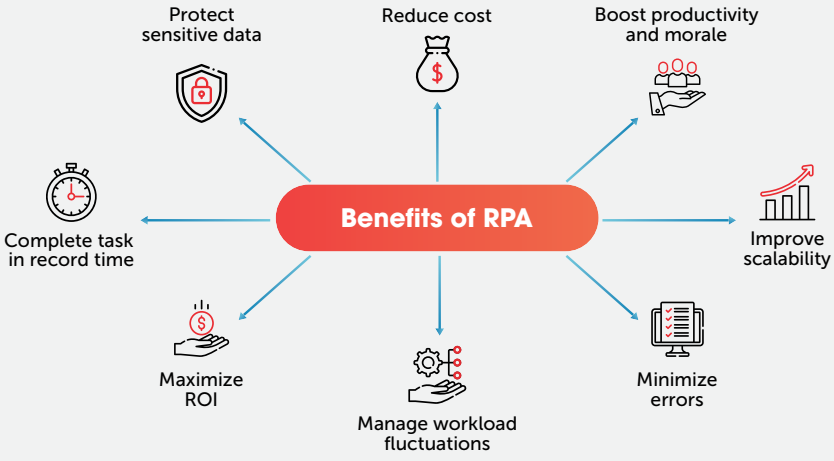
A Virtual Employee Won't Steal Your Job.

RPA isn't meant to replace positions, but rather assist with fluctuations in workloads and staffing, and allow employees to be reallocated to more rewarding projects. This leads to an improvement in employee satisfaction and alleviates staff burnout.

According to **Harvard Business Review**, most groups adopting RPA have assured their employees that automation would not result in layoffs. Instead, workers have been redeployed to do more interesting work. One academic study highlighted that workers did not feel threatened by automation: they embraced it and viewed the robots as team-mates. The same study highlighted that, rather than resulting in a lower "headcount," the technology was deployed in such a way as to achieve more work and greater productivity with the same number of people. Employees would rather be doing something else – more rewarding projects, less mundane and repetitive tasks.

According to a **Deloitte RPA Survey**, the benefits of RPA adoption are significant. ROI was reported at less than 12 months, with an average 20% of full-time equivalent (FTE) capacity provided by RPA technology. It continues to meet and exceed expectations across multiple dimensions including:

- Improved compliance **(92%)**
- Improved quality & accuracy **(90%)**
- Improved productivity (86%)
- Cost reduction **(59%)**



Taking a Closer Look:

Improved Scalability and Efficiencies

Unlike human users, RPA allows organizations to scale repetitive tasks nearly immediately, which contributes to increased productivity, time and cost savings, and overall improved productivity. Building a workflow to streamline a process in one part of your organization can be expanded by reusing or creating similar automated workflows for other projects across job functions and even organization-wide. There is no department that can't benefit from RPA.

Improve Quality and Compliance

Automation technology isn't subject to fatigue or human error. Using emulation within day to day operations can help provide a consistent basis of service and care activities. Even the most perfect employee might commit a few human errors, which you can wipe out. The results of these errors might be significant in the long run. **And in the world of healthcare, even a small mistake can cost a life.** However, when you are automating a task, you are reducing the chance of the mistake and hence, making the healthcare procedure more effective and efficient. You're also limiting employee's contact with PHI (Protected Health Information), which increases security and protects your organization from compliance issues.

Labor Savings

Using automation to replace manually intensive tasks can be a big time-saver, completing tasks in a fraction of the time it would take an FTE. Free your team from mundane, repetitive, data entry tasks. Instead, elevate your employees to higher-functioning roles that take advantage of expertise they've been trained for. Employee morale will improve along with reduced burnout, which is a large factor in employee satisfaction and morale. RPA can also be used to supplement workload fluctuations due to busy periods, employee vacations, and the increased necessity for working remotely.

Reduced Waste

Most organizations report experiencing an ROI in less than 12 months from implementing an RPA solution. Aside from the obvious time, labor, and cost savings, use of paper and spreadsheets and other workarounds needed for an overly full workload can lead to a lot of waste. For example, rather than playing phone tag with a discharged patient in the free minutes between hospital nursing duties, automation can help get nurses and patients connected more efficiently.

The Virtual Employee You Didn't Know You Needed, Until Now.

Think of all the ways you could better allocate your staff, or manage a limited staff, if you have a virtual assistant to help with those tedious, time consuming projects. Additionally, how much are you paying your employees? Hours of 'busy work' cost an organization significantly more than the tasks are actually worth. Think about the hourly pay rate of employees in your organization that do data entry or routine tasks on a regular basis. What would be the tipping point at which it makes sense to automate those ongoing tasks and allow those employees to do more rewarding or critical work?

A simple assessment can help you determine where automation should be applied throughout your organization:

- Do you manage a high volume of rules-based and repetitive tasks?
- Do you run standard reports daily, weekly, hourly, monthly?
- Are there tasks that consume many hours of manual labor?
- Do you have data entry tasks where data is available in a file?
- Are there certain tasks prone to human error?
- Is there other work your employees (or you) should be doing with the time spent doing any of the above?

Approximately 10% to 20% of human work hours are spent on dull, repetitive computer tasks, according to **Software Testing and Big Data Hadoop**, marking quite a large chunk of time that is wasted on processes that can be easily automated. Researchers at the company estimate that IT departments also spend 30% of their time on low-level basic tasks. Plus, about 50% of companies spend $5 to $25 per manually-processed invoice.

Once thought of as solely an IT tool, RPA can be expanded throughout the hospital or health system to support a multitude of departments and job functions. **Have you thought about all of the organizational areas where an intelligent workflow automation 'assistant' could take over?**

Information Technology

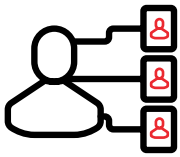
- Dictionary/Domain updates
- System upgrade testing
- System conversions and migrations
- Automated interfaces

Medical Records

- Notes processing
- Patient records access audit
- Scanned document processing
- Processing patient admission and discharge records

Accounting/Finance

- Insurance processing
- Processing electronic payments
- Payroll processing
- Tax processes
- Bad debt write offs
- Creating new GL codes or periodic finance codes



HR/Payroll

- Employee benefit processing
- Payroll updates
- New hire procedures
- Employee exit procedures
- Employee credentialing and de-credentialing

Just to name a few!

Using RPA to Connect Disparate Systems

The use of RPA has evolved dramatically over the past few years. Automated workflows, or "scripted interfaces" were originally used to connect two disparate systems, typically using a spreadsheet or database as a medium. However, they can also provide application connectivity where traditional HL7 interfaces are not an option, or are considered too expensive. An automated workflow is also highly desirable when the connection must be made rapidly to meet a tight deadline, such as for a major EHR upgrade. This is because an interface of this type is quick to deploy and can achieve almost real-time data exchange, as well as providing a means to map or cross-walk data between systems.

Automation is the best interface method for batch, real-time and interactive interfaces.

Sometimes the best solution is to use a combination of scripting and HL7. If you have a standard HL7 interface that you want to leverage (due to volume of data, etc), yet need some level of customization for your interface project, an integration partner can often provide the necessary assistance with scripting.

Why is RPA Still Needed?

Cost of those integration technologies

Take advantage of staff knowledge; already know workflow

Technologies are still maturing

Not all systems provide integration

Improved Report Output and Timely Delivery of Information

The whole process of healthcare involves several parts. One of the most important among them is the diagnosis of the disease. To perform this, a great deal of reports have to be generated. This task is performed best through the process of automation. Automated reports are delivered in pre-set formats, which are specially designed to ensure that the physicians can make the most of them. Hence, with automation introduced in healthcare, you can expect better analysis of reports and improved diagnosis of diseases.

Client Use Cases:

Surgery Partners

SST has been estimated to save Surgery Partners over $150,000 every year and countless additional resources. Perhaps most importantly, the automation of tasks frees up employees to do more challenging, satisfying work rather than repetitive and error-prone manual data entry.

St. Claire Health

After developing automations and implementing SST, St. Claire was able to track a very real return on investment. They used four factors to measure the success of the technology: time and money saved, reliability of data, usability of the software, and efficiency. There has been a significant increase in billed accounts, and improved productivity throughout the organization.

Lincoln Surgical

"We achieved full return on investment in three months due to time savings, reducing material costs and not hiring one and a half FTEs," Lenners said. "We estimate that we're saving $25,000 per quarter by using SST, and avoided having to pay another vendor $15,000 for a one-off interface."

Halifax Health

The value added and Return on Investment was almost immediate after fully implementing the SST. FTE's are saving approx. 37 hours/ day. With an estimated hourly rate of $14/hour, that's the equivalent of just over $188,000 per year saved on salaries alone.

Wayne Memorial

One script alone saved approx. $38,000 in the first year by automating the Material Management ordering and AP process with a 3rd party vendor. Money is not the only area where resources were preserved through the RPA investments, as employees experienced a major reduction in the hours devoted to performing data entry tasks. These kinds of results may not come with a fiscal number attached, but the costs savings are considerable and the benefits of giving physicians more time for patient care are too great to measure.

Silver Cross

Efficiently and successfully resolved 34,000 expired encounters in a pre-registration status. It would have taken staff an estimated 1.5 hours per account to manually check to ensure they did not have any documentation associated with them before deactivating. A one-time clean up of 10,000 accounts, at $15/hour, amounted to $225,000 in savings. Additionally, regular clean-ups of pre-accounts would have taken about 2 hours per day, which is another $11,000 per year of further savings.

Conclusion

Now more than ever hospitals are looking for ways to control rising costs and improve financial stability while maintaining staff levels and providing the best patient care.

RPA cannot account for all cost-savings, but understanding the potential impact of implementing a powerful automation platform across health systems can significantly jump start your bottom line. Most organizations see an ROI in months, if not weeks, after implementing an automation solution. As improvements continue to be made to the technology, and employees are reallocated to play more critical roles in organizations, RPA can fill that gap to allow employees to focus on what really matters.

About SST

SST is the most versatile and powerful robotic process automation platform available, and with each new release the ROI and value it produces for our clients continues to remain unmatched. This full-featured application allows any member of your team, from the junior analyst to the most experienced programmer, to easily and effortlessly build intelligent workflows in a matter of hours, rather than days or weeks, perform testing, and release into full production.

Learn more:

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